

REMARKS

Careful consideration has been given by the applicant to the Examiner's comments and rejection of the various claims as set forth in the outstanding Office Action, and favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application, as amended, is earnestly solicited.

Applicant gratefully notes the Examiner's indication that at least claims 16-19 are considered to be directed to allowable subject matter and have already been allowed.

However, applicant notes the rejection of claims 19, 23 under 35 U.S.C 102(b) as being anticipated by Wagenseil, U.S. Patent No. 5,007,332, the latter of which is commonly assigned to the present assignee, for the detailed reasons set forth in the Office Action.

Furthermore, applicant notes the rejection of claims 26 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagenseil; and the rejection of claims 28 and 29 as being unpatentable over Wagenseil as applied to the preceding claims further in view of Wiethoff U.S. Patent No. 3,828,654 as detailed in the Office Action.

Furthermore, applicant notes that apparently the Examiner suggests claiming the structural differences in the present invention over prior art which causes the difference in the functions thereof.

The distinctions over the prior art with regard to claim 20 have been brought out in the applicant's Declaration under 37 C.F.R. §1.132 as previously presented in the response to the previous Office Action.

In particular, the emphasis resides, as also distinct over Wagenseil and any art known to the applicant, that the free edge of the recess into which the spherical ball is inserted is hot-beaded in contrast with the common practice of cold-beading. In particular, the cold-beading provides for a spring back of that particular edge portion which leaves an undue amount of play and opening between the surface thereof and the ball of the joint which is located therein. This frequently leaves the entire structure open to the chattering noise and undue wear during prolonged use, thereby dramatically shortening the service life of the entire ball-and-socket joint arrangement.

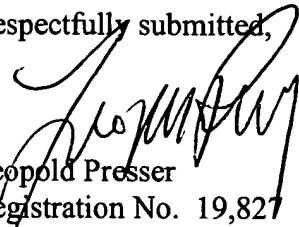
In a novel manner, which is now clearly emphasized in the claims, the applicant has hot-beaded at least that particular portion of the free recess edge into a conical form converging towards the free edge encompassing that portion of the spherical joint ball. This causes the free edge to be more closely arranged relative to the surface of the ball, inasmuch as by hot-beading, the spring back of the free edge forming the joint is reduced a considerable amount relative to the more extensive spring back of cold beading. This particular aspect in manufacturing the ball-and-socket joint can be readily measured during the manufacturing process by one skilled in the art and sets forth a significant advantage in enhancing the hardness of the entire arrangement due to the reduced spring back formed by the hot-beading in contrast with the cold-beading process as previously employed in the prior art, such as in Wagenseil and the like.

This particular aspect has now been clearly emphasized in the independent claims 20 and 23, which should render these claims patentable, in addition to the already allowed claims 16-19.

Furthermore, with respect to the remaining dependent claims these are all either directly or indirectly from amended claims 20 and 23 and should be allowable in conjunction therewith.

In view of the foregoing comments and advantages which have been emphasized in claims 20 and 23, as also supported by the applicant's Declaration under 37 C.F.R. §1.132, in addition to already allowed claims 16-19 the remaining claims are also deemed to be in condition for allowance and the early issuance of the Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited. However, in the event that the Examiner has any queries concerning the instantly submitted Amendment, applicant's attorney respectfully requests that he be accorded the courtesy of possibly a telephone conference to discuss any matters in need of attention.

Respectfully submitted,



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